

**Ambassador Mull's Remarks at the
Cud nad Wisłą and Kosciuszko Squadron Remembrance
Ossów, Poland
August 16th, 2014**

Thank you, Mayor Ryszard Madziar. It is an honor to speak at the America Day celebration for the 94th Anniversary of the Battle of Warsaw.

Today, we honor the Kościuszko Squadron, a group of American pilots who volunteered to fight for Poland during the Polish-Soviet War. They participated in several key battles during the war, including the defense of Lwów, the Battle of Komarów, and most importantly, the Battle of Warsaw. It was here that the Polish Army, on the brink of defeat, showed extraordinary tenacity and pushed the Red Army back east. This victory ensured that Poland would remain independent in the interwar years. It also halted the Soviet push westwards, which would have threatened the rest of Europe.

The Kościuszko Squadron earned the praise of their Polish colleagues. One Polish commander, General Puchucki of the 13th Infantry, reported: "The American pilots, though exhausted, fight tenaciously. ... Without the American pilots' help, we would long ago have been done for." The Squadron's commander, Colonel Cedric E. Fauntleroy, and its founder, Lt. Col. Merian C. Cooper, later received Poland's highest military decoration: the *Virtuti Militari*.

The very name of the Kościuszko Squadron invokes the long tradition of mutual U.S.-Polish support that stretches back to the very beginning of the United States. We are all familiar with the vital role that Tadeusz Kościuszko and Kazimierz Pułaski played in America's independence, and we know General Pułaski's famous note to George Washington: "I came here, where freedom is being defended, to serve it, and to live or die for it." The members of the Kościuszko Squadron proudly continued that tradition, as did the Polish soldiers who served shoulder to shoulder with their American comrades in Iraq and Afghanistan. The tradition continues today with the presence of American F-16 pilots in Poland who train with their Polish brothers-in-arms and demonstrate the ironclad alliance between our two countries. In fact, I am very proud today to greet representatives of the U.S. Aviation Detachment in Poland who join us here today. These American airmen are permanently stationed in Poland to support U.S. Air Force training detachments, including F-16 and C-130 aircraft. They exemplify the strong tradition of U.S.-Polish partnership and America's continuing commitment to Poland's security, which we are here to celebrate and commemorate. As President Obama said in Warsaw earlier this summer, "We stand together - now and forever - for your freedom is ours. Poland will never stand alone."

I thank the residents of Ossów for honoring the American pilots' who fought in the Battle of Warsaw, and for drawing attention to the importance of U.S.-Poland military cooperation. Our alliance grows stronger every day, and the world is better for it.